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These volumes are a fairly skilful and quite entertaining compilation of quotations from Bancroft and Bandelier on the Spanish-Mexican period and from the reminiscences and reports of American pioneers and military officers after that time. Three-fourths of the text is quoted matter. Six chapters are devoted to "Early Spanish explorations" and "Early Spanish missions and missionaries;" but Kino, the only missionary who ever gave his primary attention to Arizona, is given only four pages. Following the American conquest three chapters are given to railroad surveys and transportation projects, three to "Early mines and mining," three to the contest for Arizona during the civil war, two to territorial organization, eight to Indians, and nine to early settlers and settlements. A list of chapter titles illustrates the absence of any plan of organization, except, to some extent, a chronological one. Interspersed with other chapters, the Indians appear under "Troubles with the Indians," "Indian raids and outrages," "The Navajos," "The Crabb massacre," "Indians — massacres — outrages — raids," "Indian hostilities." American pioneers appear under "Early American occupation," "Early settlements and first attempts at organization of territory," "Early days in Arizona," "Early pioneers and settlers" (six chapters). In that portion of the text written by the compiler a few inaccuracies are noted: in the light of the researches of Messrs. Adams and Rives, it requires hardihood to assert without qualification that England "was preparing to seize" California in 1846 (vi, and 1:149); it was not Alarcón (1:19), but Kino, a hundred and forty years later, who settled the fact that California was not an island; the democratic platform of 1844 claimed to 54° 40', not to 59° 40' (1:119. This, of course, may be a misprint); it was Tyler's pleasure to notify Texas of the passage of the joint resolution for annexation, not Polk's "first official act" (1:119). Each volume is separately and adequately indexed, but there is neither bibliography nor bibliographical notes. There are illustrations, but no map. These are omissions which subsequent volumes in the series should supply.

EUGENE C. BARKER

*Travels in Alaska.* By John Muir. (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin company, Cambridge: Riverside press, 1915. 327 p. \$2.50 net)

This is the last book from the pen of the author and was in fact put into shape for publication only after he had passed away. While all of Muir's books are charming, this one presents peculiar features of interest in addition to the pleasing literary style and scientific accuracy that characterize the others.

Muir made three trips to Alaska. The first, in 1879, aroused his unbounded interest. He once wrote to a friend: "I am hopelessly and forever a mountaineer." Alaska gave him not only mountains, but also, in greatest variety and magnificence, living glaciers which offered a splendid opportunity for working out the problems he had been studying in his beloved Sierras. A second trip was made the year following the first; the third was taken in 1890. Thus for more than thirty years Muir had been accumulating material on Alaska before he began to assemble it for a book. Unfortunately this task was not entirely completed before death overtook him; the narrative of the volume closes in the middle of his trip in 1890. The material was put in final form for publication by Mrs. Marion Randall Parsons who for a number of months prior to his death had been Muir's helper. To her is due high praise for the success that has attended her effort to bring it about "that the finished work might exhibit the last touches of Muir's master-hand, and yet contain nothing that did not flow from his pen."

Few of the early visitors to any region are trained observers and fewer still are able to record their observations in clear, unvarnished language. John Muir could do more than this; his records of places and people present in simple terms the picture of just what he saw, and yet the delineation was that of a master hand guided by the eye and mind of an artist. From the standpoint of the naturalist Muir's writings are unsurpassed in the accuracy and skill with which they analyze natural phenomena. As literary works his essays deservedly stand high in public favor.

But the present work possesses a high value from another viewpoint. Muir's story gives first hand testimony of conditions that have passed away forever, leaving only the scantiest records of their existence and character. The historian will always be glad that Muir visited Alaska when it was still in primitive condition before the days of the great gold rush. He came in contact with its simple natives while they were as yet uncontaminated by the baser elements of our civilization; and he records his observations of them and their customs with the same fidelity and clearness that mark his description of natural phenomena. He relates their accounts of the origin of disease and the interpretation of nature. He tells of his talks with them on their religious beliefs. The mutual understanding which sprang up between Muir and the Indians is shown in many incidents in this volume, not in the least in the comment of the Chilcat natives that Muir's preaching was good and if he would come to them as a missionary they would follow his counsels, give him as many wives as he wished, build a church and school, and pick all the stones out of his path.

Life at Wrangell was indeed primitive when Muir first reached this frontier town in July, 1879; he speaks of it as "the most inhospitable place at first sight I had ever seen," and gives a vivid description of the place, the men, the houses, and the work of those early days. But the various Indian tribes seem to have appealed to him more than the white men and he tells much concerning their attire, their customs, and their activities. Soon after his arrival he was adopted by the Stickeens and given the name of Ancoutahan (adopted chief). He witnessed one of their last native ceremonies including the famous bear dance, which he has described with great vividness. Wherever he went he found something of interest in the daily life of the Indians, and he recounts these phenomena with the same care and clearness that characterize his descriptions of forests, flowers, or glaciers.

The most striking episode in the book is the canoe trip north from Wrangell. Leaving this point in October, 1879, with an Indian crew of four men for his small canoe, and accompanied by a missionary from Wrangell, Muir made a voyage of eight hundred miles in eight weeks. During this trip he traversed channels almost entirely uncharted; he went northwest as far as Icy straits, entered Glacier bay, and sailed up Lynn canal. He visited many tribes, especially the Hoonahs and Chilcats, far to the north, that had suffered little from contact with the white man and who consequently still followed their ancestral mode of life. He had meetings with many Indian hunters and participated in numerous conferences with the head men of the tribes and villages visited. At these conferences he was urged to speak, as was also the missionary, and the narrative gives an interesting if brief record of these talks, affording a clear insight into the viewpoint and mental attitude of the people.

Muir draws fine pictures of the dignity and worth of certain Indian chiefs with whom he came in contact; his report of their speeches shows them to possess an idealism and sense of values which are truly remarkable. Nor can it be said that this view is due to a sympathetic bias on the part of the historian who records the incidents, for Muir does not hesitate to portray instances of cruelty and sensuousness with equal fidelity. While the major part of the book is taken up with descriptions of nature, the author's studies on the glaciers, and the most varied natural phenomena, yet many pages are given over to incidents concerning the Indians, their family and tribal strifes, their traditions and religious beliefs, their home life and customs as well as their hunting, fishing, and their attitude towards the wonders of nature. All these records came out of his personal contact and are presented with the same simplicity and fidelity to the fact that have made his writings unsurpassed as rec-

ords of the history of nature. And as no student of glaciers or mountains can ever pass Muir's work unnoted so one may confidently assert that the student of the early races on the Pacific coast will find in this book an indispensable source of information on the life of these peoples.

HENRY C. WARD

*The sovereign council of New France.* A study in Canadian constitutional history. By Raymond Du Bois Cahall, Ph.D., one-time fellow in modern European history, Columbia university; acting assistant professor of European history and government, Miami university. [Studies in history, economics and public law, edited by the faculty of political science, Columbia university, whole no. 156, vol. LXV, no. 1, pp. 13-274.] (New York: Columbia university, London: P. S. King & son, limited, 1915. 274 p. \$2.25)

Mr. Cahall's book belongs to that class of detailed and critical studies of colonial institutions which has grown with such rapidity during the past few years. Its chief merit lies in the fact that it contains a comprehensive account of the organization and activities of an important, but little known, part of the government of Canada during the period of French rule. It is to be hoped that the author or some other equally competent scholar will investigate as fully the activities of other departments of the Canadian government, for the results of this excellent pioneer study are very illuminating. Though it deals with Canadian conditions, a careful investigation of its context will fully repay any student of the institutions of the English colonies, if for no other reason than for the contrasts it affords.

The sovereign council, later called the superior council, of New France, in session at Quebec, was the highest court of justice in Canada. The first three chapters of the book are devoted to a historical description of the varying fortunes of that body in its attempts to maintain its independence of the governor and to retain its extra-judicial powers. The final four chapters deal, respectively, with the membership and organization, the methods of procedure, the functions, and the administrative and judicial achievements of the council. There are three appendices, misnamed chapter VIII in the table of contents, dealing with the Perrot trial, the Damours affair, and the Callières and Desjordy cases. There is also an extensive and carefully selected bibliography of unpublished as well as printed material. No index is appended, but the table of contents is sufficiently descriptive for all ordinary purposes.

The council, established in 1663, was the highest court of appeal in both civil and criminal matters and also, in its early days, a court of original jurisdiction with extensive powers. This latter jurisdiction was, however, gradually limited by the increasing authority of the intendant.